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Congressional Record S. 1409 - Peace in Vietnam

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PEACE IN VIETNAM

Mr. MANSFIELD. Mr. President, the Vietnamese agreements—but not the Laotian and the Cambodian—have now been signed, and the sigh of relief accompanying them has been heard around the world.

I commend Dr. Henry Kissinger for completing the arduous negotiations, and President Richard Nixon for ending the tragic war in Vietnam.

Dr. Kissinger, in his press conference last week, in a truly superb exposition, said:

Together with healing the wounds in Indochina, we can begin to heal the wounds of America.

How right he was, and how necessary it is that we take those words to heart.

I think it apropos also to state at this time that, in my opinion, President Nixon's journeys to Peking and Moscow helped to lay the foundations for this settlement because, in my judgment—and that is all it is—the People's Republic of China and the U.S.S.R. played a significant role. I would assume, in retrospect, that probably the People's Republic of China played the most important role.

Furthermore, in this postwar period, I believe that the Nixon doctrine, not only as it affects Southeast Asia but also the entire world, will become more applicable in the years ahead and will provide a basis for a noninvolvement policy in tune with the times, on the basis of our manpower, our resources, and our security.

It now appears that, at long last, this longest, most tragic, and second most costly war of all our wars is coming to an end.

The length of the war in Vietnam, based on official statistics, is 11 years and 26 days, although some would consider it longer.

The cost has been estimated at be-

tween \$130 billion and \$140 billion. It will rise to somewhere between \$350 billion to \$400 billion, inclusive, and run well into the first half of the next century. I ask unanimous consent to have

printed in the RECORD at this point certain estimates bearing on this point.

There being no objection, the estimates were ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

ESTIMATES OF TOTAL COST OF AMERICAN WARS, BY RANK

[In millions of dollars, except percent]

War	Estimated ultimate costs	Estimated war costs ¹	Veterans' benefits			Estimated interest payments on war loans	
			Original under present loans ²	Total costs original war costs	Percent of costs to 1971 ³	Total	Percent original war costs
World War II	664,000	288,000	290,000	100	91,767	86,000	30
Vietnam conflict ⁴	352,000	110,000	* 220,000	* 200	4,700	* 22,000	* 20
Korean conflict	164,000	54,000	99,000	184	16,055	11,000	20
World War I	112,000	26,000	75,000	290	50,888	11,000	42
Civil War (Union only)	12,952	3,200	8,580	260	3,571	1,172	37
Spanish-American War	6,450	400	6,000	1,505	5,481	60	15
American Revolution	190	100	70	70	70	20	20
War of 1812	154	93	49	53	49	16	17
Mexican War	147	73	64	88	64	10	14

¹ Based on expenditures of Departments of the Army and Navy to World War I and major national security expenditures thereafter. Usually the figures begin with the year the war began but in all cases they extend 1 year beyond the end of the actual conflict. See Historical Statistics of the United States, Colonial Times to 1957, series Y 351, 352 and Y 358.

² To World War I, estimates are based on Veterans Administration data. For World War I, World War II, and Korean conflict, estimates are those of the 1956 report of the President's Commission on Veterans' Pensions plus 25 percent (the increase in the average value of benefits since the Commission made its report).

³ Source: U.S. Veterans Administration, Annual Report of Administrator of Veterans Affairs.

⁴ Estimates based on assumption that war would end by June 30, 1970 (except for veterans benefit costs to 1971).

* Medium-level estimate of 200 percent (high, 300; low, 100) based on figures expressing relationship of veterans' benefits payments to original costs of other major U.S. wars.

* Medium-level estimate of 20 percent (high, 30; low, 10) based on figures showing interest payments on war loans as percentage of original costs of other major U.S. wars.

Source: Except as noted, U.S. Congress, Joint Economic Committee, The Military Budget and National Economic Priorities, 91st Cong., 1st sess. (Statement of James L. Clayton, University of Utah), 972 Statistical Abstract of the United States, a U.S. Department of Commerce Publication.

Mr. MANSFIELD. Mr. President, the casualties, from January 1, 1961, through the latest date which I have just received, January 20, 1973, are as follows:

Combat wounded—303,622 Americans.

Combat dead—45,937 Americans.

American dead, not the result of hostile action—10,300.

For a total of 359,859 American casualties.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to have printed in the RECORD the

news release which has been given to us on a weekly basis from the office of the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Public Affairs, under date of January 25, 1973.

There being no objection, the news release was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

SOUTHEAST ASIA CASUALTIES STATISTICAL SUMMARY

The Department of Defense released today the cumulative casualties reported in con-

nection with the conflict in Southeast Asia as of 20 January 1973.

U.S. CASUALTIES RESULTING FROM ACTION BY HOSTILE FORCES

Total U.S. deaths from action by hostile forces is the sum of the following categories: Killed in Action, Died of Wounds, Died While Missing, and Died While Captured. Lines 1 through 4 subdivide casualties by cause or category. Line 5 provides an additional breakdown of the same totals by environment (air or ground). Totals are cumulative from 1 January 1961 through 20 January 1973.

	Army	Navy ¹	Marine Corps	Air Force	Total
1. Killed	25,371	1,092	11,477	494	38,434
2. Wounded or injured:					
(a) Died of wounds	3,516	146	1,451	48	5,161
(b) Nonfatal wounds:					
Hospital care required	96,800	4,178	51,331	931	153,300
Hospital care not required	104,718	5,897	37,202	2,505	150,322
Total					303,622
3. Missing:					
(a) Died while missing	1,689	187	5	440	2,321
(b) Returned to control	54	5	2	35	96
(c) Current missing	258	140	96	722	1,216
4. Captured or interned:					
(a) Died while captured or interned	15	1	3	2	21
(b) Returned to control	57	7	12	8	84
(c) Current captured or interned	87	169	26	309	591
5. Deaths:					
(a) From aircraft accidents/incidents:					
Fixed wing	90	166	144	761	1,161
Helicopter	2,388	66	432	75	2,961
(b) From ground action	28,113	1,194	12,360	148	41,815
Total deaths ²	30,591	1,426	12,936	984	45,937

COMBAT DEATHS FOR OTHER FORCES IN VIETNAM, SINCE JAN. 1, 1961³

Force	RVNAF ⁴	Other free world forces	Enemy ⁴
6. Total deaths	184,089	5,225	925,692

U.S. CASUALTIES NOT THE RESULT OF HOSTILE ACTION, SINCE JAN. 1, 1961

	Army	Navy ¹	Marine Corps	Air Force	Total
7. Current missing.....	103	1	14		118
8. Deaths:					
(a) From aircraft accidents/incidents:					
Fixed wing.....	276	184	46	290	796
Helicopter.....	1,875	55	242	19	2,191
(b) From other causes.....	4,995	636	1,392	290	7,313
Total deaths.....	7,146	875	1,680	599	10,300

¹ Navy figures include Coast Guard.² Sum of lines 1, 2(a), 3(a), and 4(a).³ Does not include paramilitary losses.⁴ Included in adjustments from previous periods and is subject to later adjustment in turn.

Mr. MANSFIELD. Mr. President, I will not go into additional details or statistics on the devastation covering such items as napalm, defoliation, craterization, refugees, disease, drugs, and so forth, although they are available—at least in the form of estimates.

Now that we have turned a corner—one of three, because Laos and Cambodia still have to be attended to—all four parties to the agreement have claimed that they have won, they say. But everyone lost, we know, even though all parties, individually, reached the best possible agreement in the circumstances.

Older men made this war, but younger men had to fight it. Let us hope that never again will another Vietnam or another Indochina occur.

The real heroes of this war, collectively, are those who served in Southeast Asia, those Americans who died, those who were wounded, those who were captured, those who are missing in action, because they all served and gave their best for their country.

What we hope is past, let us pray is past. Let us bind up the wounds caused by this tragedy; let us endeavor to heal the divisiveness within our country. Let us re-create the ideals which made this Republic what it was and what it must be again.

Let us admit our mistakes—and that applies to nations as well as to individuals—and learn from the past so that, in remembering, we will never again repeat the mistakes of this tragedy—ever again.